

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

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NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07
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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SPON, KS, US
SUBJ: KOREAN MEDIA ON TONGSUN PARK AFFAIR

SUMMARY: WEEKEND PRESS COVERAGE OF TONGSUN PARK AFFAIR DWELT ON
CAPUTO VISIT AND ON HIS PRESS STATEMENTS AFTER THE FRIDAY PTS
INTERROGATING SESSION AS WELL AS REACTIONS, UNIFORMLY UNFAVORABLE,
BY LOCAL POLITICIANS TO BOTH CAPUTO'S AND JAWORSKI'S STATEMENTS.
DIRECT PRESS COMMENT WAS LIMITED. MONDAY PAPERS REPORTED CAPUTO'S
DEPARTURE SUNDAY. END SUMMARY.

1. JAN 14-15 PRESS COVERAGE OF TONGSUN PARK AFFAIR GAVE
SUBSTANTIAL SPACE TO CAPUTO'S REMARKS FOLLOWING FRIDAY'S
INTERROGATION SESSION. POINTS STRESSED: "SEVERAL TENS OF" CONGRESSMEN
AND SENATORS ARE NAMED AS HAVING TAKEN MONEY; PARK IS SPEAKING
AT LENGTH AND IN DETAIL ABOUT BOTH KOREANS AND AMERICANS,
SOMETIMES GOING BEYOND MATERS DEALT WITH IN THE US INDICTMENT;
CAPUTO FEELS HUMILIATED BY HEARING AMERICANS' MISCONDUCT
EXPOSED IN A FOREIGN CAPITAL; ETHICS COMMITTEE WILL NOT BE
SATISFIED TILL PARK TESTIFIES BEFORE THEM, BUT WILL CONCERN
ITSELF ONLY WITH CONDUCT OF AMERICANS (AS OPPOSED TO FRASER
COMMITTEE, WHICH WILL LOOK AT KOREANS); CAPUTO IS "SURE THAT
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ETHICS COMMITTEE'S OBJECTIVES WILL BE REASONABLY AND FAIRLY
UNDERSTOOD BY BOTH PTS AND ROKG, AND THAT PTS, THROUGH
A PROPER PROCEDURE WILL TESTIFY BEFORE CONGRESS." CHOSUN
ILBO QUOTES CAPUTO AS COMPLAINING THAT, IF PTS TESTIFIES
FALSELY IN KOREA, USG HAS NO RECOURSE, AS IT HAS NO
SOVEREIGNTY HERE. ALL PAPERS REPORT THAT CAPUTO STATED
HIS INTENTION TO ASK AMBASSADOR TO APPROACH FONMIN TO

HAVE FORMER ROK AMBASSADORS KIM DONG-JO AND HAM P'YONG CHOON RETURNED TO THE US FOR CONGRESSIONAL TESTIMONY; ONLY SUNDAY SHIN-A ILBO ADDS FORMER KCIA CHIEF Y HU-RAK AS OBJECT OF SIMILAR REQUEST.

2. MOST POLITICANS' COMMENTARY WAS CARRIED IN SUNDAY PAPERS. CHOSUN ILBO QUOTES BOTH MAJOR PARTIES' DEPUTY FLOOR LEADERS AS HIGHLY CRITICAL OF CAPUTO, E.G., DRP LEADER KANG BYUNG KYU: "THIS IS A TYPICAL UGLY AMERICAN WITH GREAT-POWER FANTASIES", AND YUJONGHOE (PRO-GOVT FACTION) ASSYMAN KIM SANG-JIN CALLING CAPUTO BADLY OUT OF LINE FOR COMMENTING PUBLICLY ON THE INTERROGATION IN VIOLATION OF CONFIDENTIALITY PROVISION IN US-ROK AGREEMENT. CHUNGANG ILBO BOTH DAYS TOOK ISSUE WITH CAPUTO'S EARLIER STATEMENT THAT CONGRESS COULD HAVE PTS ARRESTED AND COMPELLED TO TESTIFY, QUOTING FROM A "FONMIN SOURCE" A LENGTHY HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF CONGRESSIONAL ARREST IMPLYING THAT THE POWER ONCE EXISTED BUT TODAY IS HIGHLY QUESTIONABLE. UNAMED OFFICIALS WERE QUOTED IN MOST PAPERS AS DEPLORING "STRONG" NATURE OF CAPUTO'S REMARKS AND ACCUSING HIM OF ELECTIONEERING; TONG-A ILBO JAN 14 SAYS CAPUTO REJECTED INVITATION "TO VISIT THE FRONG LINES" SO HE COULD "GET BACK TO PREPARE FOR THE ELECTION."

3. IN SAME VEING AND TONE AS CAPUTO CRITICISM, CHOSUN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ILBO'S SUNDAY EDITORIAL ACCUSES JAWORSKI OF "BIG POWER ARROGANCE" IN STATING THAT "CONGRESS MAY STOP APPROVAL OF COMPENSATORY MEASURES" FOR TROOP WITHDRAWAL IF ROKG DOES NOT LET PTS TESTIFY BEFORE CONGRESS.

4. MONDAY PAPERS REPORT CAPUTO'S DEPARTURE 1240 HRS SUNDAY, SOME QUOTING SNIDE REMARK BY UNAMED GOVT FIGURE THAT "NOW THE PRESS HAS LOST ITS SOURCE."

5. JAN 16 PRESS FRONT PAGED NY TIMES LEAKS REGARDING PTS TESTIMONY BUT QUOTED ROKG SOURCES AS SAYING THEY WERE SATISFIED THAT THE LEAK WAS NOT THE WORK OF EITHER THE KOREAN OR AMERICAN SIDE IN THE INTERROGATION. SNEIDER

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